

GREENWOOD
AND OTHER POEMS

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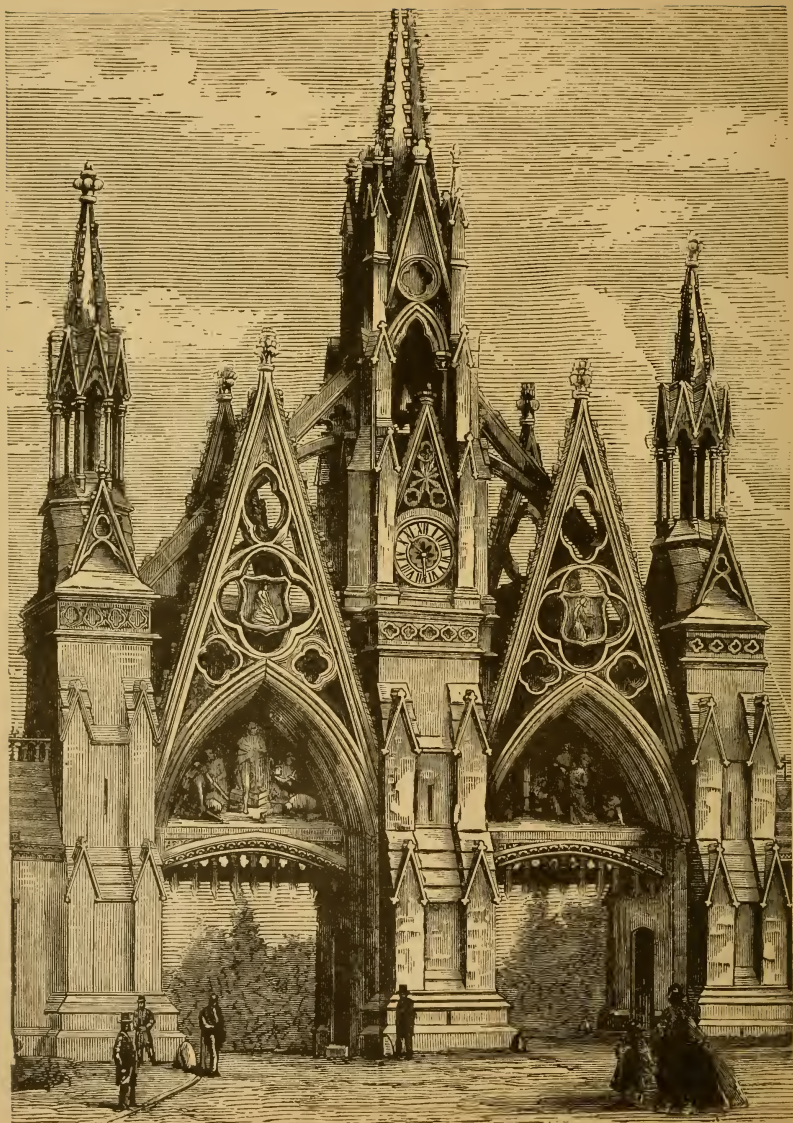
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GREENWOOD

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

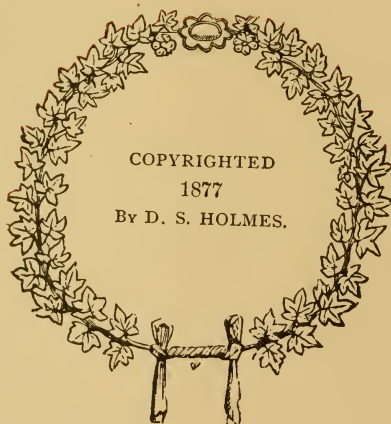
REV. S. MILLER HAGERMAN,

AUTHOR OF THE NEW AND POPULAR POEM, "SILENCE."

PUBLISHED BY D. S. HOLMES,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

1871.
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TO
THE MEMORY
OF
MY YOUNG WIFE,
BEAUTIFUL AND BELOVED.

WHAT THE GREAT POETS AND AUTHORS OF THE WORLD
SAY OF "SILENCE."

"Full of fine imagination."

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

"Silence is a beautiful poem. It has many passages noteworthy for thought and expression, which have stamped themselves on my memory at first reading."

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

"The poem on Silence has impressed me by its fertility of fancy and affluence of illustration. Its author has brought to it a fine poetic enthusiasm which is felt in every stanza, and which in other hands would have yielded but meager results."

W. CULLEN BRYANT.

"Silence has afforded me great pleasure in reading it."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

"I have read the poem more than once, with interest and admiration. I congratulate the author on the beauty of his work."

JEAN INGELOW.

"I have read Silence with very great pleasure, and am much struck by the beauty of many of them."

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

"Your book of poems demands my most distinguished consideration."

ALPHONZO XII, KING OF SPAIN.

"I have had great pleasure in reading it."

DOM PEDRO.

"Her Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to accept the poem, entitled Silence, and commands that her thanks be sent to the author."

QUEEN VICTORIA, (through her Secretary.)

"Silence is a poem of great poetical beauty."

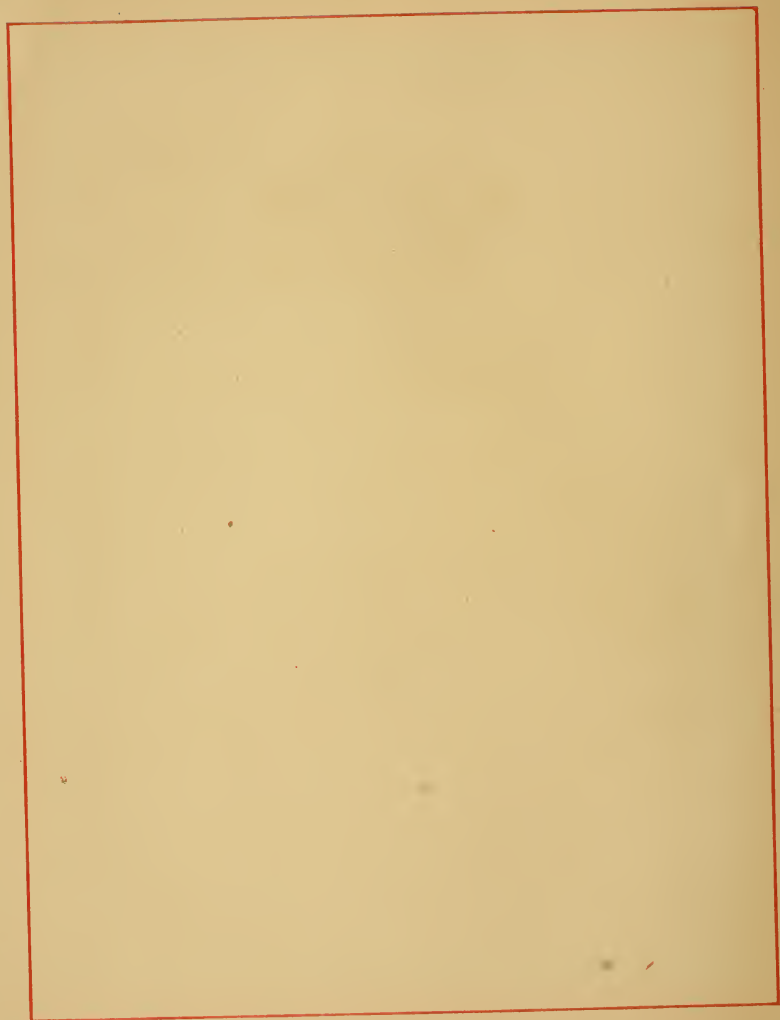
JAMES MCCOSH.
Pres. of Princeton College.

Letters from Charles Spurgeon, Disraeli, Lord Derby, Gladstone, and almost all the noted foreign authors, as well as American, have been received, speaking most highly of this beautiful poem, besides the most flattering reviews from all the American and foreign papers.

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GREENWOOD.



BY the city of the living,
By its ceaseless toil and tread;
So mute and so forgiving,
 Stands the City of the Dead.
Like twins, in a rocking cradle,
 They lie in the darkness deep;
And one is awake with a fever,
 But the other is asleep,

Greenwood.

Side by side rise the two great Cities,

Afar on the traveller's sight;

One, black with the dust of labor,

One, solemnly still and white.

Apart, and yet together,

They are reached in a dying breath,

• But a river flows between them,

And the river's name is—Death.

Apart, and yet together,

Together, and yet apart,

As the child may die at midnight

On the mother's living heart.

So close come the two great Cities,

With only the river between;

And the grass in the one is trampled,

But the grass in the other is green.

Greenwood.

The hills with uncovered foreheads,

Like the disciples meet,

While ever the flowing water

Is washing their hallowed feet.

And out on the glassy ocean,

The sails in the golden gloom,

Seem to me but moving shadows,

Of the white emmarbled tomb.

And out on the silver offing,

The ships lean down the sea,

Where the moon drops into the water,

As time in Eternity.

And I wonder if white-winged spirits

Have sailed o'er the sea of space,

And found a port and an anchor,

By the beacon of God's bright face?

Greenwood.

Anon, from the hut and the palace,
Anon, from early till late,
They come, rich and poor together
Asking alms at thy Beautiful Gate.
And never had life a guerdon
So welcome to all to give,
In the land where the living are dying,
As the land where the dead may live.

And thus the two great Cities
Of the living and the dead,
Stand side by side in their shadow.
And the river flows on in its bed.
But the river leans a little
Under the further brink,
And I love to lean with the river
To that shaded side—and think.

Greenwood.

I love to think when the twilight
Is wrapping the world in awe,
And far up the beckoning distance
The heaven's begin to draw;
Of the fast-stretched forms in the churchyard,
The beautiful and the true;
Who have fallen asleep like a traveler,
Beneath the elm and the yew.

In one there is care and sorrow,
In the other calm and peace,
And the grass in its tender gladness,
Soothes the heart with its sweet surcease,
In one the shout is sounding,
In the other the silence, like snow:
Where the golden bowl is broken,
And the sound of the grinding is low.

Greenwood.

In one life is dying forever

Like the flowers on the coffin lid:

In the other the dead die never,

And the coffin in flowers lies hid.

In one a flamy revel

Of winecup and wassail till late;

In the other the sleep worm feedeth

In its banquet hall of state.

In one there is soft-winged slander,

And rumor of windy deeds;

In the other a well kept secret,

And a riddle that nobody reads.

In one they are bitterly turning

Their faces in anger away:

In the other they meet for forgiveness

Face to face in the blinding clay.

Greenwood.

In one the lights are burning
 In the window, and the street,
For a thousand forms returning,
 For a thousand weary feet.
In the other the lights of heaven
 Gleam down through the mist of doubt,
And the virgin-stars are shining
 For the lamps that have all gone out.

The sun and the moon are passing
 Where no taper hath raised its rod,
To light the graves of Greenwood,
 And its souls on their way to God.
For the glory of the terrestrial
 Is one, and it lasts but a night ;
But the glory of the celestial
 Is another—eternal light.

Greenwood.

O silent City of Refuge

On the way to the City o'erhead!

The gleam of thy marble mile stones

Tells the distance we are from the dead.

Full of feet, but a city untrodden,

Full of hands, but a city unbuilt,

Full of strangers who know not even

That their life-cup lies there spilt.

They know not the tomb from the palace,

They dream not they ever have died:

God be thanked they never will know it

Till they live on the other side !

From the doors that death shut coldly

On the face of their last lone woe:

They came to thy glades for shelter

Who had no where else to go.

Greenwood.

They sought thy quiet slumber
With a strange and winged haste;
As a wrecking ship in the tempest
An isle, in the billowy waste.
They fled to thy sable forests
As dust is blown by the breeze,
When the little children frightened
Run out of the rain, under trees.

And like a nursing mother,
Thou standest with full-horned breast:
There is not a sigh or a tear-drop
For those in thy realm of rest.
Thou hast clothed the threadbare outcast,
And covered the naked form,
And folded the shelterless wanderer,
In thy mantle, rich and warm.

Greenwood.

No place so sweet to the weary
As a place to lay their head:
That stone-pillowed sleep of Jacob's
Was soft as the sleep of the dead.
No sleep on earth so welcome
As to rest once again side by side,
By the wasted, unheaving bosoms
By the beautiful ones that died.

For them the flowers are bringing
What we have ceased to bring;
For them the birds are singing
When we have ceased to sing;
For them the sun in heaven
Puts on, with bridal robe,
Its ring of Resurrection,
And wears it round the globe.

Greenwood.

They cannot smell the flowers,
Nor pluck them from their stem,
That while in our hands they wither,
Unplucked, they grow fair for them.
They cannot see the sunshine,
They cannot hear the birds,
But theirs, is the perfect stillness,
And ours, but broken words.

We toss, on white beds of anguish ;
But those abbots and abbesses pale,
Repose in thy stole monastic,
As when first they took thy veil,
No turning from one side to another,
No restless, bedridden sleep;
The sleep that is wearier than waking,
And leaves but the waking to weep.

Greenwood.

O City of the Silent !

What a world lies in your spell,
What an army of pale-faced pilgrims
Encamped in yon white-tented dell !
Like the dark room in the household,
Thick with cobwebs and mould and rust,
And filled with old fashioned remnants,
Is thy dark room of the dust.

Beneath the flags of battle,
Beneath the flowery wreath:
Lies the shattered form of the soldier,
Like a broken sword in its sheath.
Behind those stormless earthworks
Intrenched as in days before,
With empty sleeve and weapon,
They guard the sea and the shore.

Greenwood.

Where the valleys of Virginia
Roll their blue grass to the flood;
And the sweet streams flowing southward
Have washed out the stain of blood.
All praise for their noiseless numbers,
All pride for their faded robe;
For the grave where a hero slumbers
Is a gem in the Crown of the globe.

There lie the nameless toilers
Whose life gave up no sound;
Like music echoing music
Under the silent ground.
The lips that sipped but sadly
At Lethe's sombre stream:
And died in the starving silence
As dies a sleepers dream.

Greenwood.

There lie the forms of beauty
 With drowsy-lidded eyes
That once shone out of the spirit
 As stars out of summer skies.
The hands that dropped off at the picture
 Of the unfinished years,
The face, like the lamp or the lily
 The eyes, that were unwept tears.

There lie the famous preachers,
 Whose feet stood firm and fast:
'Mid all the forms they buried
 Buried themselves at last.
When had they such a pulpit,
 When wore they such renown?
With the sun of Resurrection
 For their sermon and their crown.

Greenwood.

There lie the mighty thinkers,
With foreheads browed and high;
Whose thought shone like their polished shaft
Or the tear that is shaped in the eye.
The steamship and the railway
Are moved by their mouldering hands;
As they stand there signing the Ages
Pale prophets with prophet-wands.

There lie the little children
Asleep in their cradles of clay,
For God is rocking their slumber
When the mother is far away.
There they fell from our arms and we left them
But we did not leave them alone:
There are no orphaned-outcasts
Under the sod and the stone.

Greenwood.

The blow of the brutal keeper
 Shall fall on them never again;
The woe on their lips unuttered,
 The suffering they could not explain.
O how often to the children
 Is death far sweeter than birth;
And the grave a softer pillow
 Than ever they knew on earth!

Go forth to their graves in Greenwood,
 That listening, song hushed land,
And take them their tiny play-things,
 That fell from their tiny hand,
The flowers they plucked in the meadow,
 Where they sickened as they stood.
The little lambs of china,
 The glistening ships of wood.

Greenwood.

There lie the remnants of households,
The mother with babe on her breast,
The lovers who parted forever
United in unknowing rest.
And like some royal palace,
Filled with treasures from every spot,
There is no furniture of life
That the Castle of Death hath not.

And the text with its "ashes to ashes"
That fell on the coffin-lid,
Shall be spoken again through the grasses,
From the lips that are sealed and hid.
When earth like a dusty Bible
Closed over in valley and clod;
Shall open its living epistles
And read them in fire up to God.

Greenwood.

O silent and sorrowful Greenwood!

O resurrection robe!

What art thou but a shadow

Of the Greenwood of the globe?

The earth is but the sepulchre

Of all since time began,

And all the passing lights of heaven

But mark the tomb of man.

Creation is God's cenotaph

Above Christ's unknown grave:

Unmarked of shaft or marble,

Unsung, of wind or wave.

And 'mid all the glittering planets

That fling their crowns on space:

Earth, is the only star that holds

Their monarch's resting place.

Greenwood.

There stands not on earth a temple

Be it ever so grand and fair:

That can with thy sculptured ruin

In its beauty hold compare.

There breathes not on earth a preacher

That utter truths so profound,

As are heard from those flower-wreathed pulpits

That rise from thy silent ground.

Go, kneel at those marble altars

O ye that are dead in sin!

And bury your pride forever

With the love that ye lay within.

Go, kneel at some shrine, a pilgrim,

And unsay the words thou hast said;

Wherethe violet breathes up, "I forgive thee,"

And the dead have buried their dead.

Greenwood.

For all the world over a wanderer,
Where e'er I may restlessly roam:
I but come to a grave in some greenwood,
The fallen-in door of my home.
Though I sport in mad glee on the billow,
Or travel in lands o'er the sea;
Or sleep (for aught dead) in my chamber,
A pilgrim, I haste me to thee.

There is no time but the present,
Between the eve and morn:
The past is buried forever,
The future forever unborn.
The stream that gleams in the grasses,
The stars that bejewel the gloom,
The flowers that spring in the meadow,
Are but epitaphs graved on a tomb.

Greenwood.

The shadows we cast in the sunlight

Upon our giddy way,

Follow like close-veiled mourners

Our footsteps of decay.

And life is a phantom-prophet

Of the death that is to be;

And its dreams but fitful dashes

Of a gleaming Destiny.

I go, but not to slumber

With the yellow corn in its shock,

I go, to be a brother

To the tempest and the rock.

I shall smile at you in the sunlight,

And clap my hands in the trees,

And ghost in the doubtful gloaming,

And shout on the bitter seas.

Greenwood.

And I feel as I fall to thinking
That my face is dusty with death:
I may wash it with sleep for a moment,
But it settles again with my breath.
And I know that I soon shall mingle
With those whose footsteps are fled;
Who dwell in the crowded city,
The City of the Dead.

O Grave ! where is thy victory?
O Death ! where is thy sting?
And what is thy raven shadow
But the shadow of a wing?
And what if the dead hear nothing
Beneath the closed door ?
Since we who listen in open space,
If we hear, hear nothing more.

Greenwood.

The face of Christ in its beauty
Like the sun at set of even,
Hath left on thy gloom a glory,
And the grave is the gate of heaven.
Then come with your touch, O carvers.
From the World that lies behind:
And art shall lay loving hands on thee,
As Christ laid his hands on the blind.

Shall the flower come up forever
And daisy and buttercup
Catch part of God's smile off in heaven,
And never a soul come up?
E'en now they are teaching us thither
As nurses teach children to walk:
And I hear their sweet tones, "come up hither"
And the air is full of their talk.

Greenwood.

The living are but a handful
To the throng of the countless dead;
They fleet in each flying atom,
They teem beneath our tread.
They have made the soul of Nature
Seem human in every part:
Since the breast of the hardest rock may hold
The sigh of a broken heart.

Ye have drunken of death, ye are drowsy,
Ye are drowsy as fools in wine;
But the slow sap of sleep shall quicken
The branch to the golden vine.
Sleep on, while we waken from slumber,
Sleep on, while we waken to pain,
Sleep on, for when ye awaken
Ye shall never sleep again.

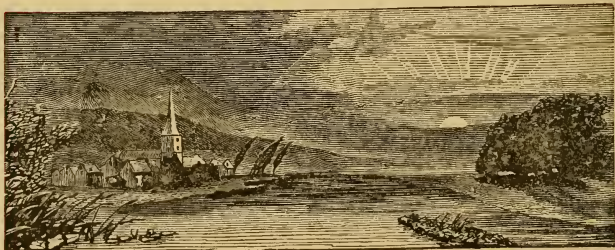
Greenwood.

And when earth's great Cities are silent
As the cities of old on the plain;
When the echoless halls of the palace
Shall be filled with the dead and the slain:
Thy streets shall be filled with the living,
Thy silence with sounds shall be rife,
Thy galleries glowing with pictures
Of every form of life.

The deaf, and the dumb, and the crippled,
The halt, and the lame, and the blind;
The brain that was more than the body,
The weak and beclouded in mind.
The mother with babe on her bosom,
The outcasts and orphans of earth:
All, shall hear the marvellous music,
And come forth, like the spring in its birth.

Greenwood.

They shall come—they shall come—to greet us
They shall come—but O how changed!
God grant with the scars swept off, but O
God grant not with love estranged!
For we all shall yet come together,
After our sleep in the sod.
And walk in the sweet summer-weather
Through the beautiful Greenwood of God.



THE LATCH UPON THE HEART.



YOU may come into my garden,
You may trample on my bed,
You may leave the lily broken
On its stem beneath your tread.

You may come into my household,
You may on my home intrude;
You may be a queen or beggar,
You may be refined or rude:

The Latch upon the Heart.

You may come into my presence,
You may lean upon my breast,
Hang like Eve on gates of Eden,
Memories where we once did rest.

But there is a latch that lifts not
When the garden gate is wide:
When the bridal hath been spoken,
When we linger side by side.

Lifts not when the two-leafed portal
Of God's palace rolls apart;
'Tis the latch that love hath fastened,
'Tis the latch upon the heart.



INSTAURATION.



THOU, around whose central throne
Revolves this vast emblazoned zone,
With all its lights and shades, a strange
Successive spectacle of change:
Thou, unto whom one hundred years
No longer than a day appears;
Thou, who hast seen all secrets pass
Like stars, across the sea of glass;

Instauration.

Thou, in the cycle of whose eye
Sleeps like a shape—eternity;
Thou, who with starry breath impearled
Hast blown the bubble of the world,
And laid thy heart along its wild
As stretched the prophet to the child,
And set within its storied arch
The music of its endless march:
Thou, who art ours in every part
By more than our own mother's heart,
Between whose arms with spirits shriven,
The dead have found the gate of heaven;
Father of light ! O what are we,
But borrowed lights of thine and thee?
Before whose face the sun must pray
Like a blind beggar, by the way,

Instauration.

Till thou dost touch his eyes with sight,
And say to him, "Let there be light."

We thank thee for this Orb of earth
On which our world has had its birth:
For Nature, museum of art,
Unveiling God, in every part;
As to the artists touch alone
The smile is breaking through the stone;
For that strong face within its frame
That ever breathes Jehovah's name;
For its dim peaks no foot hath trod
That pierce the cloud, to talk with God,
For its great forests, where enshrined
Is felt the mystery of mind;
For its round seas, whose lavers stand

Instauration.

Brightly, in God's baptismal hand;
For its deep rivers, moving free,
Earth's emblems of Eternity;
For all its beauties hung like drops
Of dew, on hill and mountain-tops;
Its flowers, with sweet and starry eyes
Coquetting to the starry skies:
Its odors, breathing up their balm,
Earth's incense to her great "I am:"
Its colors, blent in magic braid
The frescoes on its ceiling laid;
Its traceries, its shading tints:
Its snow-bright slopes, its moonlit glints;
Its crystals, set in precious stones,
Its rainbows, round ten thousand thrones;
Its sunsets, painted on the west

Instauration.

From Galilee's storm to Gilead's rest;
Its clouds that spread their gorgeous wings
Out of earth's dim evanishings;
Its birds, that flash upon the air
Like orchids, blossoming everywhere;
Its music, where thy voices call
On mellow bell and waterfall;
Its vast resources, darkly hid
Beneath the strata's bursting lid;
Its bolted gates of iron and gold
That to the touch of Time unfold;
Its gushing springs of palm and oil
That light the countless homes of soil;
Its teeming wastes, whose surges roll
Through fields of cotton and of coal,
Its founts, whose sources ever lay

Instauration.

An Instauration on decay;
Its silence, that is more than sound;
Its laws, that never leap their bound
In lightning's wing, in thunder crash,
In winds that brew and bolted, dash :
For Nature's laws are but the will
Of Him, who whispers, "Peace be still."
Not like a dragon, to devour
With thirsty eye and iron power,
The lamb beneath the lion's paw,
But Nature moved by natural law,
A nursing mother, on whose breast
The weary world shall go to rest.

Lo ! on the sun-spot of the globe,
With blistered foot and tattered robe,

Instauration.

There came a traveler, unknown,
Through gates of gold and Gods of stone.
While o'er his head he saw unfurled
The war flags of a Christless world.
He cast a seed in earthly dross,
The seed he cast came up a cross.
He passed with but a cross to tell
The spot, on which the stranger fell.
Where are those bannered domes to-day?
They are not:—they have passed away;
But round that cross, behold sublime
A Christian Century of Time;
In this our own increasing land,
While all the nations round her stand.
Above that cross there floats in proud
Repose, transfiguration cloud;

Instauration.

The robe of Christ he wore on high
Before he changed it for the sky:
Across its white and waving field
The red stripes by which we were healed,
And in its rifted heaven of blue
The star of Bethlehem breaking through.
O flag-cloud floating o'er the cross!
O stars and stripes that on it toss!
Since ye are Christ's, ours are ye too!
Our flag—our red—our white—our blue!

One hundred years—thy rushing stride
Is heard on every mountain side;
Strange as the visions of a dream
Thy galleries of wonders gleam.
Where once the red face blew his fire,

Instauration.

The school, the church, the City spire:
Where once the savage fought for fleece:
The prophet of a Christian peace;
Where once the panther crouched for prey
The children in the cradle play;
Where once the clouds of error hung
The trumpet of the truth has rung,
And chased them out through every clime
Like wind-borne leaves at autumn time.
So like an arrow to its mark
Has shot the Gospel on the dark,
Diffusing life and light to those
Who struggle through a world of woes.
O Beacon-book! through all our tears
Athwart the ocean of the years.
Thy torch has shown where dangers meet,

Instauration.

And thrown its light beyond our feet.
Thou art the treasury, thou the chart,
Of all our finest forms of art,
That found in long lost years a home
In halls of Egypt, Greece, and Rome.
So came thy workmen with their craft
Along the coast, with stone and shaft,
To build a temple, that should rise
Softly as prayer, unto the skies,
No nail, nor axe, nor hammer-stroke
Was heard, on chapter or oak,
Until it glittered in the sun,
The temple built for Solomon.
So, still along thy sacred stream
Thy treasures sail, with shadowy gleam,
Like workman, bearing arts sublime,

Instauration.

Down from the Tyre of early time:
To build, without a sound or hand
Truth's silent temple in the land.

One hundred years of thought, since man
Upon this Continent began;
Discovered erst, that it might be
The Empire of discovery.
America!—for thee the earth
Hath shed her century-seeds of birth:
And folded up its Arab tent
Within thy great experiment,
Upon thy watch-tower in the night
Inquiry waits, for larger light;
And still, from years but in their youth
Man asks that question: what is truth?

Instauration.

While, with his hands on strings of fire
He sounds thy thousand-chorded lyre;
He swims the ether like a hawk:
He dives the water like a shark:
He sees the atom like a gnat:
He fells the city where it sat:
He drives the distance down to death
And puts the great wind out of breath:
He whispers to the worlds of space,
And feels their warm breath on his face;
He, with Sampsonian steam lifts weights,
And bears them off like Gaza-gates;
He holds the compass in his hand,
And lays the sea out like the land:
He shoots the arrows of his ships
Across the sea, into their slips;

Instauration.

He walks the water with a prank
And stands where 'frighted Peter sank.
He courts the Syren of the stream
And weds her to the wheel and beam.
He tacks upon the stubborn gale
And rides it out with fattening sail.
He stands before earths iron-barred fates.
And turns them all to wings and gates:
He waits the mountains to unlock
And walks through a red sea of rock:
He builds the city, in a day
Like blocks, that children build in play,
He fills it with his bright bazaas
That glitter like a spawn of stars,
He spins the fabrics that we wear
And saves the blistered touch of care:

Instauration.

He puts his ear unto the lips
Of coming years, and tells eclipse:
He hears the wind before it blows
Across the spice-lands or the snows:
He knows the storm while yet it lies
A snow-drift, on the sunset skies:
He rides in chariots of skill
Along the highways of the hills:
He sweeps the harvests from the soil
And leaves the earth a slave to toil:
He carries fire within his hand
That turns to ice at his command:
He flings his touch upon the stone
And makes it heave and pant and moan:
He limns this silver rolling ball
And pins it to his study wall:

Instauration.

He sheds his spirit all around
The earth, in instruments of sound,
And fills the heaven of the heart
With seraphs of an angel-art.
He dredges with his glass the sun,
And plucks its shining secrets down:
He leans upon its iron spars
And steals the sodium from the stars.
He speaks on Truths clear mountain-tops
With words, that fall like thunder-drops.
He breathes his spirit into books,
And casts them warm as lovers looks.
He lights, with phospor-kindling thought
The sleeping worlds within him wrought.
He feels the soul upon its flight
A bird that sleeps on wing by night.

Instauration.

He thrids the reasons deep recess,
Adullam's cave of consciousness;
Within whose strange bejewelled light
His outer thoughts look dull and trite.
He wheels the world within his brain,
And flashes round its wide domain
With speed, that burns the wings of light,
On swift imaginations flight:
That wondrous power, on whose high wing
The thought becomes a living thing.
O hundred years! thy hands have wrought
One hundred fold of hard earned thought.

One hundred years of larger truth,
Since elder years were in their youth;
For truth they came, a little band,

Instauration.

For truth they dared the sea and land,
For truth they followed faint, but far,
And truth has made them what they are.
As from the dust the lily grows,
As from the wild-briar came the rose,
So came those sages of the Past
Like bread upon the waters cast.
By reformation's fire-lit form,
By revolution's battle-storm,
By tempest stroke and ocean shock
Was carved the shape from Plymouth rock.
Where streams the banners of the sun
That truth has made the whole world one.
The truth that breeds a man to be
True to himself, and true to thee.
The truth that scorns the baser lie,

Instauration.

And dares for right to do and die.
The truth that lit the dotard East
And took the woman from the beast,
And throned her out of slavery's thrall
The loveliest one among them all.
The truth that plants the common school,
The regent of the royal rule.
The truth that does not dread the light
Nor hoot an owl along the night.
The truth that teaches men to think
The Bible, something more than ink.
That lifts up Christ the only creed
That holds a universal need.
The truth that drowns the petty strife
That frets the small, uncultured life;
Like one, who looks with little eye

Instauration.

Out of a shaft into the sky,
And dreams that he has seen it all,
And knows not that the sphere is small.
The truth that all beneath the sun
In brotherhood of soul are one;
O century that heard the cry
Of dusky millions to the sky;
O century that made them free
Where roll their rivers to the sea!
And forged, from fetters cast behind,
The links that bond a free mankind.

One hundred years of hidden hearts
Unheralded in all their arts;
Unheard, unseen, where nations meet
The fabrics they have worked to greet.

Instauration.

One hundred years of secrets, hid
Beneath the quiet coffin-lid.
Ah! little hath the great world seen
Of all that on its breast hath been;
Ah little that which skill hath spelt
To that which silent thought hath felt.
What songs that never leaped to sound,
Like waters echoing underground!
What books that were not put to print!
What hist'ries that gave up no hint!
What wings, whose work was but to wait
Upon the spirit's postern gate!
What tears within their prison bars
That mocked the beauty of the stars!
Out of whose Lethe shall unroll
Death's water-lilly of the soul.

Instauration.

O hundred years of hidden hearts!
O shrouded brows, O long lost arts!
Shame on the man with honor gone
Who puts his principle in pawn;
Shame on the man who sells for gold
This priceless government of old:
Shame on all men who deal in shame
A slander on a noble name.

Then let the great world hail with high
Acclaim, the century passing by:
Then float the flags from bannered spires
Like distant nations signal-fires:
Then let the volleying cannon roar
And drown the ocean on the shore:
Then let the eagle in the sun

Instauration.

Shout down from heaven to earth, "well done:"
Then let the rivers far and free
Send down the chorus to the sea:
Till all earth's voices catch the strain
And roll it round the world again.

And when, O God within each heart
Thy work has done its deathless art;
Make us as little children be,
And suffer us to come to thee.



WEARY.



AM weary, O God, I am weary!

With a passion so restless, so deep;

With a sleep that is wearier than waking,

And a waking the wearier for sleep,

I am weary of living and loving,

I am weary of losing and loss,

And I fain would lie down with the shadow

Of night, on the shadowy moss.

Weary.

My soul, like a sea bird of ocean,
Swept off of the mast by the storm;
Seeks vainly, amid life's commotion
To rest on its vanishing form.

O sea bird, wild sea bird, fly swiftly!
For a sorrow is flying with thee,
Whose wail is the wail of the night wind,
And whose sound is the answerless sea.

I have walked in the world with the worldly,
I have played with the pearl by the wave;
I have seen it wash out with the water,
And die like a dream in the grave.

Let me lean once again on thee, mother,
While you lean on God's weariless breast,
On the breast that broods over the world, mother,
Where the weary are all at their rest.



RICHARDSON SC.



ETERNITY.



TERNITY—I wilder toward thy ages
as they roll,

Time cannot hold thy boundless thought
that greatens in my soul:

I stand beside thy sphere, as one, beside a sea at
dawn,

And like the breakers on the beach, thy years come
on—come on.

Eternity.

No first—no last—no birth—no death—no cradle
and no grave,

Those traceless years melt onward as wave melts
after wave:

The steps that walk thy water leave neither sound
nor mark,

Their white souls pass like close-reefed sails, and
drift into the dark.

The shadow of a perfect sphere, upon whose reach-
less round,

No arc, no rift appears in all thy fathomless pro-
found:

O journey strange and restless that never was begun!

O journey none less stranger for never being done!

What is this phantom that draws near, that men
call gaily—time.

Eternity.

A discord ever running in creation's perfect chime;
A rock that wrecks the vessel beneath a placid
lake,

A forge where human hearts are shaped to beat,
and then—to break.

A leaf forever falling from the tree of paradise
Blown through the shade of years to be and whirl-
ed about the skies;

A river darkly flowing into the crystal sea,
A throb that beats along the pulse of God's Eter-
nity.

The bridge that hangs across the gulf of years that
sweep below,
And drops away upon the void, behind us, as we go;
The school where life must study the lessons learned
of all

Eternity.

Where souls, like flowers, are trained to climb
over the jasper wall.

And this is time that ere I speak forevermore hath
flown,
That thoughtless fools hug to them and fondly
swear, their own,
Thou hast no present, for behold thou art already
gone,
And like those surges on the shore thy years roll
on—roll on.

Go back with me Eternity, upon thy rushing track;
And still behind the cloud-piled past go back, and
still go back:
Beyond the outposts of the stars, the oriel of the
sun,



Eternity.

Where God was yet in gloom-girt space the only
living one.

Tell us of worlds that He hath raised out of the
sunken past,
Or was He there a ship becalmed, whose canvas
wrapped the mast?

Tell us if till the first grey streak that told of
coming earth
God, from his vast activity had breathed no seed
of birth.

Go forth with me, Eternity, upon thy rushing flight
Fling me a spar on thy unknown deep and give
me a drink of light,
God! how we drift in raven doubt upon thy shore-
less sea;
And its billows sweep us, sweep us out on great—
Eternity.

Eternity.

I met a soul at midnight far out upon thy deep,
It dreamed not with my dreaming, it slept not with
my sleep:

A face that I had marked on earth, a face that still
was fair
But as it passed me now, it wore the splendor of
despair.

I asked it of the tearless grief that deepened in its
eye,
I asked it of its calm despair, that death that can-
not die:
I asked it whither it was bound, what countries it
had crossed
It pointed to Eternity and only answered—lost.

Else, answerless, it floated off upon the pathless air,

Eternity.

Till, like the gliding of a ghost, its spirit was not
there:

I rose to follow it, I woke, O God! that soul was
mine:

The shadow of that dream may fall upon some
sleep of thine.

Some startled sleep amid the night of life's en-
chanted ease

That takes the sleeper to its breast, that leaves him
on his knees:

And, if it come, O scorn it not, however light it
seem!

Men have been saved ere this within the passing of
a dream.

O, to be lost on such a night or wrecked on such
a sea,

Eternity.

No port,—no light,—no shore:—no God,—naught
but—Eternity:

To sob along the outer wall forever unforgiven
Whose inner arches ring with all the happiness of
heaven.

Perchance, thy hand is lighting across the yawning
gloom,

A lamp to teach thy spirit to its eternal home:

Perchance, thy hand is quenching a light already
there,

To blind thy spirit in the dark of sullen, swart despair.

The great white distance dwindles between the
near and far,

Between the soft-winged soul, between the yellow
star,

Eternity.

And eyes within the windows of earth have caught
the sight
Of windows that are darkened in the Palace of the
light.

And we are but so many breaths of one great breath-
ing God,
Whether we walk upon the earth, or sleep beneath
the sod:
Where'er their parted dust is driven like sunbeams
from the sun,
The whole great family of God in heaven and earth
are one.

How many a prayer, Eternity, from lips all ashes
now,
Hath broken glancingly upon thy iron heart and
brow;

Eternity.

Thou com'st like thief at midnight, with struggle,
bier, and pall,
And thou wilt draw thy mantle down in darkness
over all.

There comes an hour to thee, O past when from the
vaulted skies,
Thy God shall say as to the maid, thou art not dead
arise;
And there, with Pilate in thy midst in His great
judgment hall,
Thy lurid writing shall stream forth upon the jas-
per wall.

Though silent sleep the buried hours, though cold
the shrouded years,
Though lifeless what to us were once our living
hopes and fears;

Eternity.

That past, it is not dead though its still breast
beats not for strife,
A faded flower that God hath pressed within the
Book of Life.

The cry that died all answerless shall find some
answer yet,
The life forgotten by the world, God never will
forget,
And like a water-lily born through faded leaves
that roll
Across the lake, where in the night it shineth like a
soul:

So, through the dark of dying years, the dark of
years to be,
There shines one bright increasing thought forever
more to me.

Eternity.

Forget it, but 'twill sometimes chance upon thee
all unawed,

Forget it, it forgets not thee, the memory of God.

Eternity—Eternity, I sleep upon thy verge,
Above me screams the eagle and before me roars
the surge,

O were thy veil but lifted by some prophetic hand,
How close the world we count so far would then be
seen to stand.

The wild bird flying o'er the Alps upon his skiey
flight

May light upon some towering peak, and fold his
wing for night,

But thou great spirit of Unrest that wings the fly-
ing hour,

Dost know no weariness of sleep, no pause amid
thy power.

Eternity.

The rose that blushed on beauty's cheek died; as thy
breath went by,

The infant felt thy passing touch and closed its
opening eye:

The long processional of life shall come within thy
clutch,

The granite mountains of the globe shall crumble
to thy touch.

Thou hast the secrets of the world within thy
visored gloom,

But in thy own Eternity thou soon shalt find a
tomb;

And like the sun at evening that drops into the
sea,

So thou shalt drop as noiselessly into Eternity.

A WASTED LIFE.



have written in water, I have graved in the
sand,

I have blown but a bubble that breaks in my
hand ;

I go to my grave as I came from my birth,
With naught but its mound for my mark on the earth.

O would that the hour when I drew my first breath,
Had brought to me then but the birthright of death !
O would that the breast where I drew my first tear,
As I lay on its bosom had been but my bier !

The stranger that stumbles at night on my tomb,
Shall recall the lost souls I have tripped to their doom ;
And the shadows that coldly shall sweep o'er my clay,
But the shadows I blightingly cast on my way.



A Wasted Life.

I reached for a Future I never could clasp,
I lost e'en the Present that slept in my grasp ;
I lost both, to die in that pitiless dream,
That shows me, but lost, by the light of its gleam.

I waited for God while he waited for me,
I wait for H'im still whom the blind shall not see ;
As one waits before a closed house in the night,
That has bolted its door, and put out its last light.

I know the great ships in the governor's realm
Are all turned about with a very small helm ;
O God ! for that touch that hath died out of me
If my soul might, but once, turn to heaven and to thee !

THE CRYSTAL CITY.

(Published in Frank Leslie's Magazine.)



hear, afar, Death's iron gate close faintly
Behind my travelled feet ;
I see, beyond, the City of the Saintly,
The people in the street.

Soft o'er thy walls its music gently stealing,
Falls on the growing soul;
While far and wide thy starry bells are pealing
For Time, with muffled toll.

No sentries stand upon thy radiant corners,
As here, by day and night;
No slow procession moves with shrouded mourners
Solemnly out of sight.

The Crystal City.

E'en as the lights that glimmer down the distance

From evening villages,

Lend to the traveler a bright assistance,

That fires his groping eyes ;

So, from the windows of the many mansions,

Faint lights, like glimmering stars,

Gleam down the darkness of earth's broad expansions,

Between the crystal bars.

No darkened window in yon city closes

Its faces from the light;

No wanderer lost in darkened sleep reposes,

For there is no more night.

But not of glass or stone that jeweled building

Beyond the midnight sky :

Whose vast cathedral-window God is gilding

With prophets, from on high.

The Crystal City.

Thy thrones, the radiant thoughts of earthly reapers
That died not with the years;
Thy shapes, the sighs that rose from earthly sleepers,
Joy's city built of tears.

There is not heard the sound of staff or sandal,
Upon thy crystal, cast;
For thou art found not out by bell or candle,
Or won with gorge and fast.

There yet again the faces strangely hidden,
Like veiled nun at noon,
From earth and sea by thy bright beacon bidden,
Shall greet thee sweet and soon.

O shadows, like lost children sadly straying
Upon the earth by day:
O Sun, blind beggar by the wayside praying
Till God doth show thy way ;

The Crystal City.

How fades thy blazon like forgotten story,
 Upon that sky of love;
Where He that lit thee is th' eternal glory,
 The Lamb, the light thereof.

Calm City, built beyond the river,
 Whose glories, as they glide,
Sparkle so softly in the faint Forever,
 Like stars upon its tide,

How oft, as if an angel-spirit drew me,
 I cross that billowy stream !
How oft my thoughts, like travelers, come up to thee,
 In distance and in dream !

Where the great throng, robed in their shining raiment,
 Beneath an open sky,
Press on forever up thy crystal pavement,
 Out toward—eternity.

PRINCETON.



Princeton,

O many-fountained mother of us all !

High on historic hills, whence rolled the wave

Of Brittish blood back redly to the sea,

—But left thee as it found thee fair and free—

With full-horned breasts, serene and sapient,

Than sittest queen, in ermined empery ;

Diffusing o'er the land thy strong decree

Of broad intelligence, and errant law :

Embayed thy brows with wreaths of classic shade,

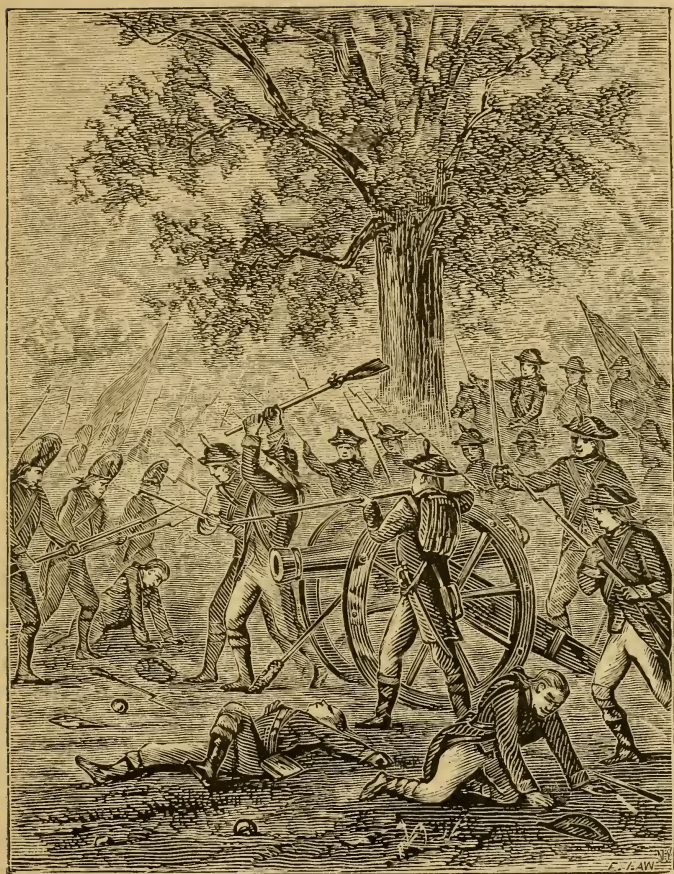
And set with that sure crown, that Time doth fast

Upon the forehead of imperial Truth.

When the swift sun,

Flatters with his last lingering smile thy form,

So long he looks him on thy lofty face,



Princeton.

—(While at thy feet already sleeps the night)

Like a fair woman looking in her glass

Thou art, unto the traveller from afar.

While, from thy peerless muniments of art,

Thy domes and towers rise o'er thee to the sky

Like sentinels, to guard thy ancient fame,

And keep the vouch and vigil of thy truth.

But when the sun hath bent him o'er thy brow,

Born, though thou wert, like that departing orb

In swart eclipse, like it thou goest not down

Discrowned, in the great golden gloom of night,

But like a palace glittering with stars,

Hung in high heaven, thou seemest.

Famed spot;

Rare is the costly crimson of thy sky,

And soft the waft of thy entempled air,

Princeton.

Far spreading rolls the landscape to the view
O'er uplands undulating to the sea,
By thorpe, and stream, and spire, and wrack of wood,
With white sheep dotted on the sloping green,
And here and there on yonder moonlit-hill
A house, where dwell the goodly farmer-folk,
And far beyond broad fields of waving grain,
Round harvest moons through rows of poplars, and
Beyond them all a vision beyond sight,
Where the fierce osprey screams and sails away.
Calm are the sounds that greet the listening ear.
The watch-dog barking on the distant farm,
The low of bullock and the bleat of flocks,
The hooting owl upon the ivied towers,
The song of birds in old eave-dropping trees,
The wind-borne murmur of the distant sea

Princeton.

Whence with high glass thou may'st descry a sail.
The evening horn from boats slow dropping by,
The rush of waterfall, the purl of brook,
The chaunted litanny of mellow bells,
The gush of music and the voice of joy.
Far from the throng that jostles in the mart
Of the great City, there the soul may dwell
In rapt repose, on the grave thought of God :
And see in sun, and star, and cloud, and peak, and tree,
Gravings of him in thy old gallery.
No poisoned shaft from deadly moss is sped
Through the bright ambush of the viewless air :
No drear caprice of season or of storm.
Hither, as to a foreign land they come,
The sick, the impotent, the sad of heart,
To bathe in thy Bethesdan-pool of air.

Princeton.

O lair of learning !

Within thy gates gather the great and good
From sire to son, a royal company,
Most mannered men and women of the world ;
Poet and painter, statesman, student, sage,
Preacher, philosopher, and famed divine
And in their midst, clothed on with queenly grace
Fair woman dwells, the loveliest of them all.
Mother of mighty men, serene and chaste
There live the dead embalmed with book and scroll
Preserved against the flippant touch of time,
They, whose great souls have cast their slough of clay,
They, who with wingéd haste for nobler fray
Have done with death forever, and do live
In that last larger life that follows life, ,
As sun doth follow sun. Earth hath no clay

Princeton.

With which to cover those old kings of thought
Time hath no touch with which to spot their crown,
On thy Olympian height they sit as gods,
The mighty potentates of that vast power
That moves the world; unto their mouldering hands
The swift ships pass, the engines shake the globe,
The bugle sounds on war-horsed warrior,
The lightening weds the world with nuptial touch,
The braided railway knits with flashing thread
The shining fabric of a continent,
And lo, the boundless air but holds their breath,
Above whose dome Creations starry vault
Standeth a cenotaph o'er Christ's lost grave.

School of the prophets,
Still from thy ancient fount flow down thy streams

Princeton.

Of truth, whose waters spreading from thy hand
Baptize the earth, and lip the shores of space.
And thou, some generous tree of years, planted
Above the world, that bringing forth thy fruit,
Spots all the ground below with golden rime.
Albeit the sects do multiply themselves
A hundred fold, and each with claim divine;
High looker-on the plain of strife below
So be not thou, nor take thy part with them,
Disdaining all the tendencies of truth
For Truth itself—thy scope and verge the world,
Thy grasp—the scarce-won Genius of thy God,
Thy central creed an undivided Christ,
So shall thy face enchant the eye of earth,
And God shall hold high tryst with thee.

Princeton.

Noble Nassau,

Old house of Lords in lordly learning met,
Where science keeps her knighted troth with truth
Through all the golden wedding of their years
Hither the student holds his customed way
Afar, that he may pour upon the page
Of high philosophy. O thou famed height!
The stars fawn at thy feet, the passing sun
Gives up its shining secrets to thy glass,
And n the cycle of the espial eye
The earth is but a dusty crystal, while
About thy walls by 'customed cap and gown
The classic of thy academic air
Hangs like the scent of sandal-wood long pressed
Between the pages of some rare old book.

Princeton.

Princeton.

Oft as of old I fain would fondly seek
Afar, the lettered quiet of thy rest ;
Home of my childhood, Cradle of my grave !
I love thee; though thou soon dost bid him go
Who comes to thee, thou dost him least of all
Forbid a fond return. Calm be thy years,
And strong the empire of thy dowered domain,
Bestowed with pomp of proud humility :
While on by rustic aisle and carven name
Where spreads thy old and legendary tree,
Like leaves, thy generations come and go,
But thou remainest.



PALISADES—FORT LEE.

THE HUDSON.



monarch of the mountain throne
Whose sceptre greets the sea !
Beneath thy towering shrine of stone,
My spirit kneels to thee.

Broad empire of an empire state,
As thy bright train comes forth
I greet thee, monarch, at thy gate,
Proud river of the North.

Cold as its star thy Cydnian stream,
And crowned thy brows with snow:
While Summer paints her gorgeous dream
Upon thy banks, below.

The Hudson.

Vainly, the Rhine's proud castle seeks

To hold compare with thine:

Thy castles are thy mountain peaks

Eternal and divine.

Thy beetling forests, dark and deep,

Fling down from that cold height

Their scarf of colors, o'er thy steep,

In foliage, rich and bright.

Eternal, sempiternal tide,

Whose waters never fail;

I come, a stranger, to thy side,

To listen to thy tale.

Thou art as one, whom God hath sent

Upon his way, sublime,

To mark, where'er thy waters went

The rushing flight of Time.

The Hudson.

The print of years is on thy scroll
 Since first thy step went by:
And while its glittering lines unroll,
 Thy story shall not die.

When did'st thou break the stony seal
 That bid thy waters wait:
And with that hand whose power I feel,
 Knock—at thy unbarred gate?

When did'st thou stand as Moses did
 Upon the mountain side :
And by thy wand-like current bid
 Its stony waves divide?

How did'st thou hew thy hollow track
 Deep down thy gorge of stone:
And set the tall pine darkly back
 Against his silver throne?

The Hudson.

Like some old giant thou dost dwell
 Within thy rocky cave:
No sway can break thy bearded spell
 Or chain thy subtle wave.

And yet, the flashing retinue
 Of thy tremendous power,
Is but a drop of mountain dew
 Upon a mountain flower.

Thy wild bright waters are the same
 As when, with whoop and stride
In his canoe the Indian came
 By moonlight down thy tide.

The clear strokes of the settler's axe,
 Upon thy sable shore:
The stony marks of monster tracks
 Still haunt thee as before.

The Hudson.

The lion's roar, the leopard's leap,
Merge in thy mighty stream:
And where thy silver waters sleep
The guns of armies gleam.

There Freedom set her starry flag
Upon thy battlements;
And high on stormless cliff and crag
She spread her snowy tents.

While out upon thy broadening bay
The nations of the world,
From flagstaffs closed in peaceful fray,
Their colors have unfurled.

O snow-crowned Sovran of the streams,
Still, from thy mountain-tops
Thy flood of waters brightly gleams,
And never, never stops.

The Hudson.

Changed yet unchanging is thy face
 Since first I looked on thee:
Thou last of all Earth's passing race,
 Thou wilt not change with me.

By castled crag, and sail, and town,
 And uplands bright and broad:
Flow on, forevermore, flow on,
 Thou Poem of thy God.





SEA BIRDS, WILD SEA BIRDS!



Sea birds, wild sea birds!

Wreckers of the white-capped wave,
Wheeling on the winds that rave
Off by stormy cliff and cave,
Sea birds, wild sea birds.
Swooping, dipping
Round the shipping

Cradled on the billow's grave.

Out upon yon treeless ocean,
In its calm and its commotion,
Mocking back its restless motion,
Sea birds, wild sea birds!

Sea Birds, Wild Sea Birds.

Sea birds, wild sea birds !

Where the petrel lightening leaps,

Where the wolf-wave never sleeps,

Where the eagle-tempest sweeps,

Sea birds, wild sea birds !

Wildly whirling,

Through the swirling

Surges, of the yeasty deep.

By yon bifurcated gleaming

See! A ship is sinking, steaming,

And upon its mast-tops screaming

Sea birds, wild sea birds !

Sea birds, wild sea birds !

Hooting at the fowler's dart,

Laughing at the angler's art,

Scoffing compass, sail and chart,

Sea birds, wild sea birds !

Sea Birds, Wild Sea Birds.

On the pillow

Of the billow

Rocked like child on mother's heart.

Nor, within the forest's nested,

Far from them upon the crested

Wave, sleeps bird so softly breasted.

Sea birds, wild sea birds !

Sea Birds, wild sea birds !

So, like you, with winged haste,

Wheels my soul upon her waste,

Swept by sorrow and effaced;

Sea birds, wild sea birds !

And, like shadows,

Eldorado's

Are the phantoms it has chased.

Sea Birds, Wild Sea Birds.

Still, that wild bright sea I covet,
With the clear blue sky above it,
Land of sea-birds, o I love it!
Sea birds, wild sea birds!



THE DANCE OF THE ATOMS.



have read in the ancient romances,
Of the weird and the wonderful dances,
Whose music still subtly entrances
The credulous children of care.

But of all that excites the emotion,
Like the waves of a refluent ocean,

There is nothing so wondrous as motion;
The dance of the atoms of air.

In the leaves of the linden that quiver,
In the murmurous shadows that shiver
Like a sigh on the breast of the river,
The sound of their footsteps is there.

They sport on the bar and the billow,
They wail in the wind and the willow
They riot on tomb and on pillow,
And dance in the pitiless air.

The Dance of the Atoms.

Their phantoms around us are gliding,
Their spectre-like shadows are striding,
But the spirit that moves them is hiding
In the curious garments they wear.

Hand to hand in wild harmony blending,
They clasp in gay coquetry, wending
Their way, in shapes strange and unending,
The dance of the atoms of air.

Hist! Hist! to the sprites as they wander,
Now here and now there, and now yonder,
How they dance in the beam as I ponder,
And rush up its spiral-like stair.

Like the heart that is beating in slumber,
Not one of that shadowy number,
That throbs not in crystal or umber,
To the dance of the atoms of air.

The Dance of the Atoms.

They group in the crystal and castle,
With a structure that leaves Art a vassal,
An Isis hid in an Igdrasil,
So noiseless, and faultless, and fair.
Like artists and builders combining,
In the dream of a wondrous designing,
They are building and carving and twining
In the ivory halls of the air.

Away, where the flowers are breathing,
Away, where the surf-beats are seething,
Away, where the bright clouds are wreathing
Their wraiths in the sunset so fair.
Oft it seems through the dim twilight bending,
As if heaven were noiselessly sending
All her painters and carvers, unending,
At work in the beautiful air.

The Dance of the Atoms.

The brain in its eddy and dreaming,
In its fretting, and fever, and scheming,
Is flaming and chafing and streaming
With atoms that worry and wear.

And ever in joying or grieving,
And ever in thought or achieving,
The spell that its atoms are weaving,
Is the dance of the atoms of air.

And the soul, like a worn, jaded dancer,
Asks vainly of knight and romancer,
Asks vainly of Ages—its answer,
Still asking of seer and sayer.

But I know that calm moves with commotion,
As a swan on a wild swelling ocean,
And repose is the shadow of motion,
The dance of the atoms of air.



AN APOSTROPHE TO THE SETTING SUN.



Unthronéd orb!

That, but so lately from thy unshared seat
Mid-heaven, with flashing crown and seamless robe,
Didst fling thy gold-branched sceptre o'er the earth:
King of all kingdoms, ruler of all realms ;

At slightest look of whom, the flower came forth,
The mountains knelt with bold uncovered head,
And all the world awoke to hail thee,—Lord !
How liest thou low upon the glimmering hills
Like a spent warrior, with folded arms,
While to thy side doth haste her softly,—Night,
To cool the fever of thy burning brow
With dew-dipped hand.

An Apostrophe to the Setting Sun.

Why art thou fallen ?

Thou who hast caught in one bright glance of thine
What the round earth shall nevermore behold,
The earth itself, and all upon its face ;
Why shrink'st thou back, bewildered, at the sight
Of that which thy own smile hath first evoked ?
Thou who could not be stained e'en though thy heart
Lay all day long upon the stagnant pool ;
Thou who hast shone, unshattered, on the steel
That hedged with death-locked jaw the clashing host :
Thou who hast walked the heaven alone with God,
Why lose thy crown at night upon a hillock ?
While, from the height where lately thou didst shine,
A single star with pert, presumptuous eye
Looks down triumphantly on thee.

An Apostrophe to the Setting Sun.

Well might thou hide
Thy muffled face within the cowl of Night ;
For thou hast seen enough of mortal woe
To make, methinks, a God turn him away.
Thy light hath led the world's great armies forth,
And shown the mark, and taught the sword to strike.
Thy lamp hath lit, too oft, the darkened face
That died within the night, and showed it dead.
Thy smoking feet have swept the desert sand,
Unworn, unsand'led, while in their hot tracks,
The pilgrims falters on with blistered tread.
Thy hand that opened the full flower of youth,
But points the aged to the sunless grave.
And e'en thy eye so steadily hath strained
Its moveless gaze upon the reddened globe,
That it hath caught the color of its pain,

An Apostrophe to the Setting Sun.

And driven it blear and bloodshot on the night,
The while on all of this thou still wer't forced
To—smile.

O bright opaque!
O signet Orb! what art thou after all?
A shining night within a shining day.
A porch-lamp in the palace of thy God.
The sign of some vast splendor yet to come,
Blinded by thy own brightness, there is none
So darkly bright, so brightly dark as thou.
I see thee not though by thy light I see.
I know thee not save as a stranger, though
I have no visitor that comes so oft.
O bright eclipse! How doth it in thee seem
As'f God had turned his back upon the world.

An Apostrophe to the Setting Sun.

O thou that once
In pity, took thy face from that red rack,
Where hung the Son of God, and drew a veil
Of darkness o'er his mother's straining eye,
Lest she should look too long upon Him there!
Since then, thou nightly turn'st thy pitying face
And ours, away from each red cross of earth ;
Where else the soul would bare its breast and die.
O setting sun, O dim discrowned orb !
Though like a lichen creep thy dust-trailed skirts
Upon the hills, thou art but gone a-while
Into the dark, to brighten thy dim crown ;
Whence, for the sake of all the sleeping souls
That sank with thee, thou shalt come up, of God
Resplendored, and recrowned, and brightly born,
As on thy birthnight.

THE BURNING OF THE BROOKLYN THEATRE.



he great moon o'er the city rose,
Slow up the sky in sad repose,
As if to mark the worst of woes
Upon the earth that night :
It hushed the sounds of toil that scream
From smoking throats of stone and steam,
And lingered like a silvery dream
On Brooklyn's snow-crowned height.



The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Bright as the open gate of God,
Above the hurrying throng, that trod
Those streets for the last time, it stood,
 And whispered : "Here is rest."
And, wildly on that portent sky,
White clouds, like souls, went shivering by,
But, as they neared its home on high,
 They slept within its breast.

Beneath its beams that great throng met,
Where Death had drawn his iron net,
Nor saw the feast that doom had set,
 Before their eyes was spread :
Then thrilled each heart with wild delight,
Then shone each face like stars at night,
While yet, within each others sight
 They were already dead.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

A hand, within that haunted hall,
Was writing on its shadowy wall
Those awful words to one and all,

“Prepare to meet thy God!”

While, on those heedless eyes and lips
Hung like two dread companionships
Eternity,—and swart Eclipse,

In silence, overawed.

The pageants pass, the curtains rise,
The actors stand forth in disguise,
A thousand and a thousand eyes

Were wild with wild applause :
Behind the scenes the fire-fiends rave
Like voices, crying in a grave,
Along the vaulted architrave,
Along the window-bars.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Nobly they stood there side by side,
Between the flame and pit they cried
Hold ! but the deafening billowy tide

Washed all their words away.

They, who had felt the flames go by,
They, who had stayed too late to fly,
They, who had only time, to die,

A crash—and where were they.

The glare put out the pitying moon,
The heavens fell back in glassy swoon,
And all the night was bright as noon

Upon a cloudless day.

Fire! moaned the wild bells ceaselessly,

Fire! raved the night-wind fearfully,

Fire! said the sky unto the sea,

But never a word said they.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

For, with one wild terrific stroke
The fire-fiend swirled his sword of smoke,
Smote them as lightning smites the oak,
 And blew their breath away.
They little know the levin flame
Was eating piecemeal all their frame,
They wore, when all was wrought, the same
 Sweet smile, they wore by day.

The engines snort like frightened steed,
The torrents dash with frenzied speed,
The fire-fiends glut their hellish greed,
 And gorge their midnight meal.
See! by the blaze, with axe and pail,
While hot sparks pelt like winter hail,
The red-capped firemen through the gale
 Climb up with hearts of steel.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Within a window's gusty glare,
Was seen a woman, standing there,
With fire-lit-face and blazing hair,
 Within its crackling frame.
Her eyes were coals, her arms were brands,
Wildly she waves her blackened hands,
The high wall topples where she stands
 And falls back to the flame.

Ten thousand eyes are on them now,
The blaze is hot upon their brow
And solemn as a dying vow
 The place grows where they stand.
For every flame that leaps a-pace
Seems holding up a human face,
And beings that we cannot trace
Fly for the heavenly land.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Across the sky their spirits stream,
The stars like funeral torches gleam,
And down the distance of its dream

Like clouds, they melt away.

What recks the engines awful roar?
What look the frozen workman for?
Their scalded faces on the floor?

But where, oh, where are they.

O! never such a play was set,
O! never such strange actors met,
With faces we can ne'er forget,

That brand us with their eyes!

O! never curtain dropped by night,
Its cenotaph on such a sight,
As there was lifted to the light

Of those December skies.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Like panic-stricken herd on plain,
Like storm-swept waves of yellow grain,
They writhed unto each others pain

Within each others sight.

Piled in a deep and weltering pyre,
Smoking with sacrificial fire,
On their own altars they expire

'Twas o'er, and it was night.

Baptized by fire, and then by flood,
Burned in their own hot breath and blood,
With garments dabbled in the mud

Three hundred stiff and stark.

Not one of all that ebbing tide
That struggled outward side by side
Looked backed nor knew that one had died,

Nor missed them in the dark.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

The ships were dreaming on the bay,
The city wrapt in slumber lay,
Nor knew until the break of day,
 That its own dead were there.

O never ship on midnight sea
Far from the lights that mark the lea,
Went down so quick, so silently,
 Without a word of prayer.

Ah! in that moment who can tell
What prayers arose, what tear-drops fell,
For those they loved so wildly well
 Whom they should see no more.

What wonder that they should be found,
With fingers on the latches round,
With charred heads listening for a sound
 Against a bolted door.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Full many a future plan was laid,
Full many a marriage there was made,
Nor bridesmaid stood, nor bishop prayed
 Upon that dreadful night.

Close claspen in each others arm,
So deep their love, so close their charm,
Sweet souls that felt not any harm
 Together passed from sight.

Within the Morgue, at dead of night,
With spectre hands cross-folded tight,
Gleaming, along the darkness, white,

 They laid them there, unknown ;
And skeleton mothers still caressed
Their skeleton infants, to them prest,
And candles flared on every breast
 For such as knew their own.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

O! never such actors seen as they!
And this is what they seemed to say:

“By fire we lost our bolted way,
 By fire we must be found;”
And by that dread, sepulchral glare,
Passed many a bent and aged pair,
And many a maiden walking there
 Fell back in heavy swoond.

And deeper than that play was laid,
In many a home it hath been played—
“The Orphans”—that its role hath made
 Orphans forevermore;
And stronger than that plot was cast,
’Twill grow upon the scenic Past,
Until earth fades in fire at last
 And its strange play is o’er.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Upon the choicest spot of earth
That brows the city of their birth,
By men of culture and of worth,
 They sleep on Battle Hill;
All-honored be the men who gave
The unknown dead an honored grave,
Where patriots sleep, who died to save
 The ground their bodies fill.

All-honored be the lips that pled
For hands that begged, for hearts that bled,
By winter chilled, by want bested,
 Such deeds let others tell;
How many a home of joy and wealth,
With generous haste and nameless stealth,
Poured out its stores of life and health,
 Shall be remembered well.

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

O! Temple burned with human breath !

O! Temple dedicate to death !

Listen to what thy drama saith,

Nor turn thy ear away:

By ruins paved with many a heart,

By spirits that within thee start,

Built for a monumental art,

A temple where they lay !

Awake, oh fallen form of Art !

Awake, oh Virtue, all thy heart !

Arise! lest thy last right depart !

Thy lofty throne to take;

Spite of the wrongs that work thy shame,

Spite of the sins that spot thy fame,

A slander on a noble name,

Awake, oh Art, awake !

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

Oblivion! let thy curtain fall
Forever, like a funeral pall !
On shame's foul pageant, over all,
 Go, hide thy hideous face !
Curst be the man that cheats the good !
Curst be the shame of womanhood !
Curst be the hand that would unhood
 An angel in disgrace !

Strong spirit of an unborn age,
Rise on the century, swift and sage,
To drown the petty persiflage
 That saps the heart of youth;
Shake off thy viper to the fire !
Shake off thy shackles, and aspire
To lift forever, high and higher,
 The lofty form of Truth !

The Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre.

O Thou ! who on Thy flaming cross,
Did'st see a dying sinner toss,
And, at a look, did'st dower his loss
 To gain, before Thy sight ;
O ! let the heart of mercy melt
For those poor souls who wildly felt
For Thee at midnight, where they knelt,
 And died on Brooklyn Height.



THE PHILOSOPHER'S GHOST.

“What custom wills, in all things should she do it,
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heaped
For truth to overpeer.”—*Shakespeare, Cor., Act III.*



saw a spectre in my sleep,
With ghostly pace its vigil keep,
Till all my blood began to creep.

My eyes were closed in sleeping prayer,
My doors were drawn with bolted care,
But still I saw it standing there.

His eye was sharpened to a thorn ;
His beard was white and overworn,
And at his side a ponderous horn.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

I heard his rheumy fingers creak ;
He came and laid them on my cheek,
And then a shrivelled voice did speak :

Ha! ha! what means this sleep of thine ?
Is not thy soul a spark divine ?
Awake, and say " Old night is mine."

Breathes there no God in thee astir,
To sit as sleep's astrologer,
And thou, an old philosopher ?

What mean these instruments of skill,
Scalpel and blowpipe, scroll and quill ?
To mock on thee when thou art still ?

Dost thou not think it something hard,
That God hath left thee off thy guard,
As are the dead within the yard ?

The Philosopher's Ghost.

Whence comes thy soul?—from mother?—God?

Or, was it sired out of the sod?

Or, wilt thou to the monkey nod?

Thy cheeks look something like the rocks,

Thy face, a little like a fox,

Who says this is not orthodox?

Will thy soul be, when its cold brain

Knows not its sprout of seed or grain?

When man dies does he live again?—

Nay, tell me, what is death at most,

That wreck upon a billowy coast,

But being giving up its ghost?

That gleam called God, sooner or late,

Is it inferred, or all innate,

Or, art thou left to speculate?

The Philosopher's Ghost.

'Tis true that two and two make four :

But how can One, whom I adore,
Be only one, and be two more ?

And if three Infinities in One,
Tripartite, Father, Spirit, Son,
Is not infinity outdone ?

And if thy thought be found so small
Of One who wraps this boundless ball,
God is the greatest Ghost of all !

I know 'tis idle to discuss
Why sin hath entered into us
But how its sire ubiquitous ?

And who is he that clearly saw
Eternally, each link, and flaw,
And works—the law within the law ?

The Philosopher's Ghost.

How did thy mind begin to think?
Or, wert thy knowledge at its brink
When thou went down there first to drink?

Think—What is thought? Go try its feat;
Is it where brain and being meet
Æolian of æolian heat?

I know God's breath is in his book
Why smother it with clasp and hook?
Let it blow open to the look.

What marvel should it be of thine,
If time re-change it line by line,
Is there no gold within the mine?

Purse up thy pride, and mouth and pout,
But know, that to thy farthest doubt,
The stream of truth will ne'er run out.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

Fool that thou art, why dost thou sit
To Science, with thy eyebrows knit ?
Thou had'st no Bible save for it.

Who printed first its parchment page ?
Translated it to every age,
And dowered its ample apanage ?

True Science is what she hath been,
The prophecy of all within ;
The stern expositor of sin.

I know thy dream, and all that thou
Art thinking on me even now
The while my breath is on thy brow.

What wonder thou dost think me elf,
Or robber bent on midnight pelf,
Seeing thou dost not know thyself.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

Wilt thou make answer unto me,
Or say, because thou canst not see,
“Dare not to deal in mystery.”

I saw the spectre stalk away,
I heard his gibbering where I lay,
But what he said I cannot say:

But still, with both his glaring eyes,
He watched me dreaming in disguise,
As lion couchant for surprise.

And thus I talked unto myself;
By all the books upon my shelf,
What shall I say unto the elf?

I know—but cannot comprehend.
I know—but thought is on the trend,
Beginning is already end.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

I know—but what I knew before
Is gone from me for evermore—
A refluent wave upon the shore.

I know that what is quick in me
Is born of what hath ceased to be,
And man is made of mystery.

I know no more, I know no less,
Than what the actual can confess ;
All else to me, is—Nothingness.

I know that all that I can find
Within, without, before, behind,
Is but Perception of the mind.

I lie, with arms around my stole,
And dream that I have clasped the whole—
O God! who ever clasped his soul?

The Philosopher's Ghost.

I know that Intuition's eye
Is fed by processes that ply
Its crucible of chemistry.

And if, like foreign sail at sea,
The shapes of mind are mystery,
I am a greater ghost than he ;

For he is but a phantom shape,
With no pretensions but an ape,
Whose errandry is but to trape.

But I, though born above, below
Drift ever windward, far and fro,
And knowing, know not how I know.

By all the books upon my shelf,
What if that wriggling, gibbering elf
Be a projection of myself !

The Philosopher's Ghost.

I saw the spectre smile and grin,
I heard him shake his skeleton,
And leave the spot where he had been.

This time he came with outstretched arm,
As if he meant to do me harm,
I could not stir, so strong his charm.

Though it be true, quoth he, at most,
That I am but a creature lost,
Shadowy with night and chill with frost,

Thou art by far the greater ghost,
For thou of knowledge makest boast,
But dost not know thyself, at most.

Thou know'st, as fishers by the sea;
But wherefore—what—and whence—are we,
Are fathoms too far down for thee.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

Nay, more thou dost not know thy frame,
From all its facts of common fame,
Or whence its mystic motion came.

To feel thy hand, where'er thou art
So close a creature to thy heart,
Yet, orphan-child, that begs apart;

To weep, and then to leer and laugh,
To vow, and then to sip and quaff,
And write life down an epitaph.

What is thy frame that God hath made?
A sexton leaning on his spade
The shadow of a deeper shade.

Graves are not all within the ground;
The saddest one that can be found
The tomb in which Life gropes around.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

Nor sprite nor shape thou e'er did'st see
Was half so much a wraith as thee,
Nor half so much reality.

Go, lay thy thought upon thy brow,
And swear thyself an idiot now,
An idiot that knows not how.

Unknowing like an idiot, keep
Thy dream, with those that laugh and weep,
Within the padded cell of sleep.

A hermit, living since his birth
At the cave-centre of the earth,
Could not of knowledge be so dearth.

For he who with the greatest call
To knowledge, finds its sphere so small,
Must be the greatest ghost of all.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

And none so weirdly, wildly strange
As one, who to the touch of change,
Sees knowledge burgeon all its range.

And thus, to know or not to know,
Since both are parts of one wild woe,
Both wear the goblin here below.

Thou hast no place, thou hast no mark,
That comes out of the boundless dark
Like Ararat, to rest thy ark.

Thou know'st not even where thou art
A hermit, like thy hand, apart,
Thou livest more beyond thy heart.

And then, to hear thee stamp and swear
That thou art sitting in thy chair,
When thou might be well,—anywhere.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

Seeing thy ignorance so immense,
Far better swear against the sense
Than lose thy faith in Providence.

Hist! Hist! I am but wizard elf!
Though lost, lost but in wood and delf,
But thou art lost unto thyself;

Lost in the light that fires thy eye,
Lost to the thought (O, God on high!)
That thou art lost, yet none so nigh;

Lost to the love thou once did'st bear,
The knowledge of thy childhood fair,
The prayer of her with crowned hair;

And, like a ship unpiloted,
That drifts at sea with all its dead,
While streams the headlight at the head ;

The Philosopher's Ghost.

So shines thy sun a-front thy sense,
While in its light unguided thence,
Helmless, thou shalt be drifted hence;

Found of the strand the barque may be,
Found of the sun the seed may see,
But found not thou, fore'er, by thee

I saw the spectre turn once more,
I heard his drag upon the floor,
And thus I reasoned, as before.

If what you wizard says be true,
How does it hap I ever knew
You were not I, I were not you?

And yet, reality doth seem
The mazing of a moving dream,
The glimmer of a firefly gleam;

The Philosopher's Ghost.

For if there be no other fact
Than knowledge of my single act
All else must wear a ghostly pact.

The car that flies along its range,
The wheels that whirr in dizzy change,
Seemed strange because I seemed strange.

Like close watched idiots let loose,
Unknowing servitors of use
That cannot see or stop or choose.

I know that nothing is found out
That was not born at first of doubt,
Hypothesis, turns all, about.

And yet, what recks hypothesis,
Fire is the best analysis
Its product, ashes—and a hiss.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

And thus the day is as the night,
And in the livery of light,
“We walk by faith and not by sight.”

O thou that sittest clear and calm,
Above the storm that raves the palm
In *Consciousness* the great “*I Am !*”

Tranquility that broods intense,
Folded within that felted sense,
That wraps thy vast Omnipotence ;
Speak, O thou “still small voice” within !
The Holy Ghost spoke low and thin.
“Thine is the ghostliness of sin.”

An arrow that hath missed its mark,
A shadow trembling to the dark,
A Nothingness lit by a spark.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

And men shall look thee in the face,
And say, "He lives in such a place,"
Nor mark the change thou can'st not trace.

Fie! fie! the ghost did then reply,
With grinding teeth and lecherous eye,
A sinner calling upon high!

Is thy Inspirer leagues away,
That thou dost stretch thy speech and pray?
See! On the wall the brindled gray!"

But since you seem a set old man,
As when the midnight hour began,
I'll ply you with another plan.

I'll rid you of your stubborn boast;
I'll make you wake up well, at most,
And waking, say, "I am a ghost."

The Philosopher's Ghost.

Could there be likelier time than morn,
To wake and find the dead all born?
Then blew the ghost upon his horn.

And from the floor, and wall, and gloom,
Unnumbered phantoms stalked the room,
Like spirits rising from the tomb.

Ghosts of all sizes, stuff and shape,
From monster grim to crawling ape,
Across my dream did tweak and trape.

There were the sins of shadowy years,
The flitting form of hopes and fears,
And some wore smiles, and some wore tears.

The friends of long departed days,
With thirsty eyes and throbbing gaze,
And one, would warning finger raise.

The Philosopher's Ghost.

The dreams that died within my eyes,
Like clouds, that vanish on the skies
O'er their own seas that saw them rise.

I saw my life since it began,
I saw the memories it outran
Within the million-headed man.

I woke—my hand was on my cheek ;
I was the ghost—I could not speak ;
I crept into the sun's great streak.

The angel on the village spire,
With frosted hand and glistening lyre,
Was pointing to the wind's desire.

The sun dropped down behind the night,
I said, " ' By faith, but not by sight, ' "
" But in thy light we shall see light. ' "

The Philosopher's Ghost.

And God is light, and God is good.
Benignant are the eyes that brood
Upon my populous solitude.

I heard the great wind rise and blow;
I said, "The world is very slow"—
" ' Whither thou goest I will go ! "





BELVIDERE.



Too soon, too soon, ah all too soon

Thy genius came upon thee !

For ere earth shed its damask smile

The hue of heaven was on thee.

Too soon for thy unaided soul

Arose its splendid vision !

Thy breath was but a wearing chain,

Thy body but a prison.

Belvidere.

O fair thy face, yet far away

 The look that gathered o'er thee,
While, like the shadow of the day
 Thy soul had gone before thee.

Thou wer't not doomed as others are
 To wait for life immortal,
But thou wert born a heavenly waif
 Laid at death's radiant portal.

And if to thee most lovely maid
 Earth seemed a spot elysian,
Thou wert not disobedient
 Unto the heavenly vision.

Genius, thou rare and costly gift,
 Thou splendor cold and lonely,
Thou one bright star upon the sky
 When one is shining only.

Belvidere.

Thy beacon is the face of God,
Imagination regal,
And fast by tempest, sun, and flood,
Thy wing is with the eagle,
O! who would set the hands to ply
Their touch on garments olden,
That once have struck a single note
On harps whose strings are golden.



CHRIST.



alm Christ ! who in thy soul didst close
The sorrows of a mortal race,
And mould the passion of thy face
Into the marble of repose.

And reach thy thought through all of Time,
And count each separate pulse of pain
And feel it throb through thee again
Into a sympathy, divine.

The world is wrapt with gloom and thrall,
And I—I cannot see thy face,
I can but feel thy firm embrace,
And thou O Christ art all in all !

Christ.

What means this secret kept in me,
This muffled soul that chafes within,
These thoughts that knock with silent din,
Upon the door of Destiny ?

This echo of the parting breath
Forever calling coldly back
Thy broken heart, upon the rack
Of flesh, to close again with death ?

To throw him from thee in the dark,
To break his thews with blows of life
To feel him knit for stronger strife,
In all the weakness thou shalt mark.

These dabbling drops of blood and tears
That smell of war, and hint of strife
That through the labyrinth of life,
Dash all the chambers of the years.

Christ.

These graver doubts that gloom the mind,
Cold shadows of a warmer truth,
That warp us from our early youth,
And weired us to the bitter wind.

The legend of a larger life,
A larger life that is to come,
That holds within its doors of home
A father, mother, sister, wife.

My earthly eyes are shot with dust,
My feet are sliding on the drift,
But up to thee a voice I lift
In some such words as these,—I trust.

O! thou, who with divine intent
Beneath thy very cross, did'st break
The bread that meant thy life, and make
Thy suffering—a sacrament.

Christ.

I know that sorrow is a curse
Unless it finds its joy in thee,
And pleasure, but a pain to be,
And nature, but a fatal nurse.

Drive forth our groping moods abroad,
And clear within us out of strife
That golden love whose perfect life
Finds kindred in the heart of God.

Could'st thou but part with all thy pain,
And spread upon thy throbbing past,
The vague of an unconscious vast,
Then only had'st thou lived in vain.

O! thou who on thy heart hath trod ;
Lift up the lichen of our trust
Out of its trailing in the dust
To grow like ivy round its God.

POLLEN-DUST.



he seed that sleeps within the flower,

Falls back, but not in vain ;

It is but waiting for its hour

To bloom a flower again.

So fall my thoughts and all about,

Blown by the great world's breath :

The flower of life but blooms from out

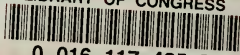
The pollen-dust of death.







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